

REMARKS

Claims 1-11, 14, 26-28 and 30-38 are pending in this application. Claims 1-8, 26-28 and 32-34 are amended herein. Claims 36-38 are new in this amendment. Claims 12-13, 15-25 and 29 were previously canceled and claims 9 and 10 were previously withdrawn. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims in view of the following remarks.

As an initial matter, Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for allowing claim 35. Claims 2, 3, 4, 5 and 34 have been amended to address Examiner's objections.

Claims 7, 11, 14 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bloomstein, *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,730,256, hereinafter "Bloomstein "). Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomstein in view of Gruening, *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,319,788, hereinafter "Gruening"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claim 7 as currently amended, specifically recites: "exposing said layer of resist except for said ring of resist and then removing an exposed portion of said resist," and "after removing the exposed portion of said resist, depositing a further layer of resist atop said substrate and atop said ring of resist." Claim 7, further recites: "exposing said further layer of resist" and "developing and etching said further layer." In other words, the steps detailed in claim 7 include two independent patterning steps. However, the teaching of Bloomstein discloses the exact opposite. The Bloomstein reference does not teach removing a portion of the first layer before depositing the second resist layer (example see Figure 1 of Bloomstein). Further, Bloomstein does not teach patterning the top resist after patterning the bottom resist. In light of the above discussions, independent claim 7 is allowable over the Bloomstein reference under §102(b).

Claims 8, 11, 14 and 34 depend from claim 7 and add further limitations. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are allowable by reason of depending from an allowable claim as well as for adding new limitations.

Claims 26-28, 30 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Perng, *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,066,570, hereinafter "Perng"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 26 has been amended to clarify the regions "periphery" and "device region." Claim 26, as currently amended specifically recites: "providing a wafer with a top surface that includes a periphery region on the top surface of the wafer-surrounding an inner device region on the top surface of the wafer." The disclosure by Perng does not teach forming a ring of material over the top surface of the wafer to separate the periphery region of the wafer from the inner device region. Instead, as per the Perng reference (abstract) "a deposited layer is formed on the wafer for covering the back surface and the edges such that redeposition of silicon on the back surface and edges of the wafer during etching is prevented." Therefore, independent claim 26 is allowable over the Perng reference.

Claims 27-28 and 30-33 depend from claim 26 and add further limitations. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are allowable by reason of depending from an allowable claim as well as for adding new limitations.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu (U.S. Patent No. 7,045,435, hereinafter, "Liu") in view of Wolf (Silicon Processing, Vol. 1, hereinafter "Wolf"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the regions "periphery" and "device region." Claim 1, as currently amended specifically recites: "forming a ring of organic material on a top surface

of said wafer to separate said periphery region at the top surface of said wafer from the inner region at the top surface of said wafer.” The disclosure by Liu does not teach forming a ring of organic material atop the wafer to separate the periphery of the wafer from an inner region on the top surface of the wafer. Rather, the Liu reference relates to a method of forming shallow trench isolation. As is well known, isolation regions are formed in all regions of a wafer. Therefore, independent claim 1 is allowable over the Liu reference under §103(a).

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and add further limitations. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are allowable by reason of depending from an allowable claim as well as for adding new limitations.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Perng in view of Wolf. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

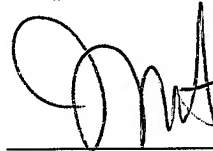
Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the regions “periphery” and “device region.” Claim 1, as currently amended specifically recites: “forming a ring of organic material on a top surface of said wafer to separate said periphery region at the top surface of said wafer from the inner region at the top surface of said wafer.” The disclosure by Perng does not teach forming a ring of organic material atop the wafer to separate the periphery of the wafer from an inner region on the top surface of the wafer. Therefore, independent claim 1 is allowable over the Perng reference under §103(a).

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and add further limitations. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are allowable by reason of depending from an allowable claim as well as for adding new limitations.

Applicant has made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Ira S. Matsil, Applicant's attorney, at 972-732-1001 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible. No fee is believed due in connection with this filing. However, should one be deemed due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge, or credit any overpayment, Deposit Account No. 50-1065.

6/28/07
Date

Respectfully submitted,



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